The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.

VOL. XXI. BOSTON, APRIL 20, 1872. NO. 51.

For the Myrtle.

The Unwilling Scholar.

Hired to go to school! oh, Billy!
Fie, — for shame on his baby tears!
Who would have thought our boy so silly,
Almost a man with his five brave years!

Hired to go to school this morning,
With the sun so bright and the flowers so sweet;
Every bird sings out his scorning
Flying abroad so busy and fleet.

See how the baby points his finger
At the schoolboy who must be hired to go;
See how he laughs at the steps that linger, —
Five years hence *he* will not do so.

Take a lesson from baby brother,
Lift the satchel and dry the eyes;
For a pleasant boy that minds his mother
Baby's apple shall be his prize.

H. A. B.

"Is the Sermon Done?"

Closed was the preacher's last appeal;
The worshippers were gone,
Though some still lingered here and there,
Round many a sod and stone;
When up there ran a little lad —
"Sir, is the sermon done?"

"The preacher's words," replied the man,
"Are ended, it is true;
But those great precepts he has taught,
Demand attention too;
And so the sermon is not done,
But it is all *to do*.

'Tis easy a short Sabbath hour,
To learn of wisdom's way —
To listen to the word of God,
And mark what preachers say;
But 'tis our duty through the week
To ponder and obey.

Then will the sermon, boy, be done,
When evil is abhorred —
God, not alone on this his day,
But every hour adored,
For piety makes every place
A temple of the Lord."

For the Myrtle.

Only a Week.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was after much wandering and long groping, and many times enquiring, that the boys at last found themselves down at the wharves among the shipping.

Now this, instead of ending their confusion and bewilderment, seemed but to have begun it. Such multitudes of ships, — such wildernesses of masts. It seemed to the poor confused boys that there could not be room on all the sea for so many, many ships.

"I am sure the ships must crowd and jostle each other on the ocean, as the people do in these crowded city streets," said Alf.

"I don't know but they do," John replied. "I never dreamed there were half as many ships on all the sea as seem to be lying at these wharves now."

"I wonder what has brought them all in at one time. There must be something extra going on in New York that brings all the ships in the world here at once."

"It has got two extra big fools in it just now," said the coarse voice of a man who was standing near, and had been listening to this conversation. "Do you think the sea can't hold all these ships? I guess you've never been away from your mother's apron strings before."

Alf laughed at this rude joke, and said:

"What makes you think that we have never been from home before?"

"Because you are so green. It makes pumpkins ripe when they have lain in the sun a while. And it's the same with boys. They grow ripe pretty fast sometimes when they get out of sight of the latch-string."

The boys liked the looks of this man. There seemed a real genuine bluff honesty in him, which attracted them.

Then he was inclined to continue the acquaintance, seeming more than willing to answer the questions that were put to him.

"Are there not then an unusual number of ships in New York to-day?"

"Bless you, no. I have seen twice as many here many a time."

"I don't well see how that could be," said Alf. "It doesn't seem to me that you could see twice as many."

"Why not?"

"Because your eyes wouldn't hold twice as many ships as there are here to-day."

"Speak for yourself. Perhaps your eyes wouldn't until you get them wider open. But it's my opinion that your eyes will stretch some before you re done with this world."

"What makes you think so?"

"Because I have so many times watched young kittens."

Again the boys laughed. It seemed such a funny idea to compare them to young kittens. The man continued:

"These ships that you see here to-day are only a part, and a very small part at that, of the ships that sail the sea. There are as many in all the large ports, and of course those that are in at any one time, are few compared to those that are out. Just as the number of birds at roost are few compared to the number on the wing."

"Ah! but at night almost all birds are at roost."

"Is it night all over the world at the same time, you little goose?"

"No, of course not."

"Well, equally of course, there is never a time when all ships are at roost."

The boys laughed again

"What are you laughing at?"

"Laughing at the idea of ships going to roost," said Alf.

"I've been on them many a time when they were on the wing, that I would have been greatly obliged to them if they would have gone to roost."

"Then you are a sailor?"

"Me? Of course I am. A regular Jack Tar. I have seen more days at sea than on shore."

"Are you an American?"

"I don't know."

"Don't know what country you belong to?"

"I don't belong to any country."

"How can that be? I thought everybody belonged to some country."

"Oh, no, they don't, not by a long shot. There's plenty of fellars like me that don't belong anywhere."

"Well, how do you make that out?"

"I don't make it out. It made itself out."

"What can you mean?"

"Why, the first thing that I remember was a ship and the sea, and the next thing was a ship and the sea; and the next, and the next, and so on all through life. And there was no country in it anywhere."

"Do you mean that you were born at sea?"

"I should think so. If I ever was born. I've heard 'em tell of one Topsy that 'wasn't born but growed,' and I allus thought it must have been so with me."

"Do you not remember your father and mother?"

"Bless you, no. I just remember the ship and the sea, and that is all. Don't think I ever had a father or mother. And a country I'm pretty sure I never had."

"Then if you never remember living on shore, you have of course no memory of the first time you went to sea."

"Of course not. And don't wish to have any. Why should I wish to remember a *first* time?"

"You might on our account, if not on your own."

"Why? What difference does it make to you?"

"Why my friend here and I, are going to try the sea, and I didn t know but you could give us some advice as to how it would be best to get about it."

"What? are you going to ship as sailors for the first time?"

"Yes sir."

"Well, I don't know about your getting a berth without trying some time for it. Sailors are very plenty just now. I never see so many hanging round these shores as there has been for the last month. And the green hands of course wouldn't be so likely to get chances as them that'd had some experience."

The boys looked a little discouraged at this statement.

"Oh, you needn't be down-in-the-mouth about it. Perhaps you may get a chance the first time you try. There's no telling what's in store for you till you *do* try; and half the battle in everything you do is in keeping your courage up."

"Well, how are we to get about it?" said John. "Never having had any experience we do not know how to take the first step."

"Well! there are shipping offices, plenty of 'em, all about these streets, where sailors go and engage for any voyage they wish to make."

"Are these the best places for us to go?"

"No, I don't think I can properly say that I think they are."

"What then shall we do?"

"Well! if I was out of a berth and wanted one, I would go to the ships, and ask for myself."

"That would seem the best way."

"Yes, a long sight the best way. Because you can see the old tars for yourself then, and if you don't like the cut of 'em, why you just needn't hitch on to 'em that's all."

"Yes, there is a good deal in that."

"Of course there is. What's the use of tying up to a hitching post before you know whether you want to be hitched there or not."

"Well, then, what we are to do is to go to these ships one by one, and ask them the question whether they want to engage sailors."

"Bless me, don't put it that way. Ask 'em if they want to ship a hand."

"Very well."

John and Alf exchanged winks, as much as to say, — we are hands, feet, heads and bodies; why should we bargain ourselves off as one hand.

"Where do you want to go? Does that make any difference to you?"

"Oh, indeed it does," said Alf; "we want to go out to China, and we are going to stop there, and not come back in the ship."

"Well, you needn't tell that everywhere you go. Get your ship, without any words about your future, and then give it up or stick to it just as you like when you get into port."

"Is that a good fair bargain?"

"Bless you, yes. You're your own man always when you touch land."

"Well, I like that very well, if it's fair."

"Fair or not, it's what all tars expect. And now as to your ship. You keep right down this way and in about half a mile from here you will begin to come to the big merchantmen. Then enquire till you find one bound for China and board her."

"Thank you. If we need to come back to you for advice, shall we be likely to find you about here?"

"Yes, somewhere about the brig 'Magdalen.' I belong to her and she to me; and I'm always somewhere about her."

"Good bye."

"Good bye and good luck to you."

Mrs. E. M. Bruce.

Childhood.

CHILDHOOD! happy childhood!
Once again I stand,
In my silent dreaming,
On thy sunny strand;
mine eyes the laughter
ToC mes in place of tears,
To my lip the music
Learned in cloudless years.

Once again the morning
Rosy red is born,
And the yellow sunshine
Slants across the corn;
Clearly pipes the blackbird,
In the orchard trees,
In the ruddy clover
Hum the drowsy bees.

On the sloping hillsides
Daisies whitely blow,
While above them softly
Shade and sunshine go;
Violets in the meadows
Blossom all untold,
And the cowslips cluster
With their cups of gold.

Through the tender grasses
Barefoot children run,
Fanned by summer breezes,
Kissed by summer sun;
All their pulses throbbing
To one blissful tune;
All their days at dawning
All their months are June!

WHENE'ER a duty waits for thee,
With sober judgment view it;
And never idly wish it done;
Begin at once and do it.

For sloth says falsely, "By and by
Is just as well to do it;"
But present strength is surest strength,
Begin at once and do it.

And find not lions in the way,
Nor faint if thorns bestrew it;
But bravely try, and strength will come,
For God will help thee do it.

THE UNWILLING SCHOLAR.

For the Myrtle.

My Friend's Parrot.

STOPPING lately at the house of an old friend in New York, I was very much amused with the talk and other performances of a parrot; and perhaps the readers of the MYRTLE will be interested by a short account of it. I wish I was naturalist enough to give a good description of the bird, and tell to which family among the great variety of parrots this one belongs. It is called by some a grey parrot, but its color is more that of a light slate with a tinge of blue, than a grey. Its tail, however, is a bright red. This bird is nearly a foot in length from the point of its bill to the end of its tail. Its eyes are small, but very bright. Its beak or bill is hooked and very strong, and it makes it useful in a great many ways. Its feet are rather long and wonderfully convenient. In one of them it holds its food, while eating, as a child holds his in the hand. With its feet and bill it can climb, almost as well as a monkey, though it is by no means as quick in its movements. It is very careful, however,

and never loses its hold or exposes itself to a fall.

This parrot came into its present good quarters quite accidentally. It was a very stormy day when it was discovered on the small grass plot in the rear of my friend's house, so weary and weak that it made no effort to escape and allowed itself to be taken up and carried in, where it was soon provided with a suitable cage. It seems to have got out by some means, and was probably carried by the wind to the place where it was found. It need not regret the accident, however, for it has fallen into an excellent house and has become a great pet in the family.

A considerable part of the time it seems to be a very dumb and uninteresting bird, keeping quite still and looking as wise as an owl. Then it suddenly arouses itself and begins to talk. It often proposes the common question among friends, "How do you do?" If hungry, it is accustomed to recommend itself by saying, "Good, good." It can whistle better than any boy or girl I ever saw, and indeed goes through a variety of fine notes in their way. It imitates a number of birds, which it has heard in the country, where its friends take it in the summer. It can beat half the roosters in the country at crowing, and barks as well as some of the dogs. It says "cuckoo" very finely, and stops a team with its broad "whoa" as well as any teamster could do it. It repeats the names of several members of the family, and makes the mother very sad by calling "Henry, Henry," who died many months ago, and who answers it no more.

A canary bird occupies a place very near our parrot, and receives no inconsiderable attention from it. Indeed, I am not sure that the parrot does not address a good deal of its talk to the little canary. Sometimes it seems patronizing, and then almost affectionate, towards its more singing friend, which it calls "Dickey." Its familiar name in the family is Dick, and twenty times a day you will hear the parrot saying in all kinds of tone, "O Dickey." Its own name is Poll or Polly, and it has a great deal to say to and about itself. It often calls itself "Pretty Poll," and adds with a strong interrogation, "Polly want a cracker?" Then it will surprise you by saying in very good English, "You're a humbug!" and if you are not pleased with that, will perhaps add in another tone, "You're a fool!" and then, as if conscious of having overstepped the boundaries of good breeding, will say in a tone of self-reproach, "Oh, naughty Polly, naughty." It has another expression which it brought with it to my friend's, which it frequently repeats and then corrects itself by its penitent, "naughty, naughty." This is, "Scratch your head, Polly? scratch your head? Oh, naughty, naughty Polly."

Some time ago a dry goods man sent a variety of curtains to the house, from which the mistress was to make a selection, and of course she asked the prices, and on his telling her, our parrot cried out, "Oh, what a price!" "What an awful price!" It calls the chickens, and the dog "Carlo," and then laughs as heartily as possible. *R.*

A Fancy.

FRIEND, I have something to tell thee;
Trifling to thee it may seem;
Still, I will tell thee the story,
Remember, 'twas only a dream.

Last night, when the stars were shining,
And sleep brooded over the earth,
A fancy came to my pillow —
Take the fancy for what it is worth.

Together, "over the river,"
In the Father's house we were!
But I cannot speak of the glory
That shone about us there.

The dear Lord gave thee thy guerdon,
A higher never was won;
For it came from the lips of the Master,
And the language was, "Well done!"

Then turned He where I stood waiting,
Poor insignificant one,
And He said unto me, "My daughter,
What great deeds hast thou done?

What good to thy fellow creatures,
Child, hast thou wrought for me?
In making up of my jewels,
What place shall I give to thee?"

Then, friend, thou didst answer for me,
And plainly I heard thee say,
"Father, she helped me a little,
Just a little, on my way."

Others came then and whispered
Of some little word or look;
Of some help that from weary shoulders,
A part of the burden took.

And others told of slight service,
Not worthless the Master deemed;
But, friend, thou wast first to answer,
And I thanked thee in my dream.

And the light shone brighter about us,
As there in His presence we stood,
While from his lips came the sweet saying,
Even "she hath done what she could."

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

—Easter Sunday was very generally celebrated in our churches and Sunday Schools. Notwithstanding the severe storm, floral decorations were abundant and congregations were out in large numbers both at church and school. At Charlestown, the anniversary of the Sunday School was held in the afternoon, with a large audience, interesting speeches and elaborate decorations of flowers.

—The Shawmut Sunday School of this city held its thirty-fifth anniversary on the same afternoon. The exercises were appropriate not only to the occasion but to the day, and were exceedingly impressive. The church was adorned with floral decorations about the altar; upon a scroll of red groundwork appeared the white letters, "Christ the Lord is risen to-day," with a cross of flowers above and wreaths of evergreen around it. In front of the pulpit was a purple velvet scroll fringed with gold, bearing the words "*Gloria in Excelsis, Deo*," surrounded with wreaths, crosses and bouquets.

The Superintendent's report showed the members of the school to be 310. The average attendance for the year had been 70 per cent. The number of volumes in the library is 1227. We noticed especially among the statistics given, the mention of 16 conversions during the year.

—At Cambridgeport the church edifice was handsomely decorated with flowers, hanging baskets being arranged at different points. Around the altar was a profusion of pot plants and cut flowers, over all was placed the suggestive "Cross" and "Crown." In addition to the interesting morning services. the Sunday School exercises are thus reported. "A programme for an Easter service by the Sunday School, assisted by the choir, had been arranged; and notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather the children, through the exertions of a few zealous friends, were brought to the church. Substantially the original programme was carried out. Though the storm raged violently outside, *inside* all was light, warmth and cheerfulness,—only smiling faces, happy hearts, and gentle voics were there. A very pleasing episode, near the close of the service, consisted in the presentation to the pastor of a beautiful, fragrant and costly basket of flowers, by Miss Annie Foster, in behalf of her class.

—The services of the Easter Concert of the school in Wakefield, where Mrs. C. A. Winship is superintendent, were beautiful and impressive. The vestry was most elegantly decorated with a profusion of exquisite greenhouse flowers in baskets, vases, wreaths and crosses. On the walls were the mottoes "Gloria in Excelsis," "Christ is Risen," and "They shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads." The beautiful and affecting address of the superintendent on "Immortality" was in part devoted to blessed memories of those pupils and teachers who no longer walk below but with their risen Lord above. Loving tributes were paid those pure, gifted, devout ones, Mrs. Wait, Mrs. Raynor, Mrs. Murkland, and Miss Leighton. Many of the poems and hymns recited by the children were selected from the writings of these departed teachers. The Easter carols and memorial songs were very sweet and touching, several of the solos being performed by some of the very tiniest of the pupils in clear birdlike voices. One of the wee ones, truly marvellous in skill as a pianist, sang "Beyond the Clouds," and "Little Footsteps" to her own accompaniment. The story of the resurrection of Jesus was told in dialogue by five little misses, two of them the very smallest in the school. In the Easter Cross, a piece spoken by several girls, the first took from the cross the thorny crown, and each in turn hung upon it her garland with appropriate words.

Thank offerings were presented to the school by somthe classes. The engraving "Christ's Entry into Jerusalem," by Mrs Lapham and class; a pair of brackets from Mrs Harrington and class; the chromo "Evening Hymn," from Miss Thomas and class; and the chromo "Easter Cross," from the pastor and his Bible class. At the close, after an address and prayer by the pastor, the superintendent received an Easter offering of a magnificent bouquet with a splendid silver vase inscribed "Easter, 1872," and the "Poet and Painter," a costly volume containing two hundred poems and one hundred plates, all gems from the world's greatest poets and artists.

—The School Street Sunday School of this city celebrated its thirty-seventh anniversary on Sunday morning, April 7th. A large audience was assembled to engage in this last anniversary of the school in the church which has for all its history been its Sabbath home. A special service was arranged for the occasion and the singing by the school was one of the pleasantest features. The address by the superintendent was interesting in matter a finely written and delivered. Addresses by both pastors added to the interest of the occasion. The school numbers 302, and has a library of over 1700 volumes.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

—Our kind friend and helper, "L. F." of Weare, sends the following account of Easter Sunday in their school:—"The Universalist Sunday School here observed Easter with a concert. The exercises consisted of reading a service, "The Mission of Christ," from the Manual, recitations, dialogues, singing, &c. Among the pieces recited we would especially notice, "God is Love," "The Merits of Universalism," "Little Willie's Signal," and "Over the Stream," arranged by one of our teachers, which was beautifully rendered by seven young ladies. Notwithstanding the bad travelling a good number were present, all of whom enjoyed the evening and felt that it was another to be added our many happy occasions."

CONNECTICUT.

—Rev. J. M. Paine says of the school at Norwich,—"The Sunday School numbers one hundred and fifty members, and is constantly increasing. A recent festival netted $602.50; a lecture for the Sunday School realized $25.00, and the Society has raised its assessment of $100.00 for the General Convention—all this within two months."

NEW JERSEY.

—A Sunday School has been organized at Jersey City, and holds its sessions in a hall where church services are also held by the society there. The school meets at half-past nine in the morning.

OHIO.

—Of the Sunday School at Mt. Gilead, Rev. N. S. Sage writes.—"The Sunday School, under the supervision of Bro. Thomas, is the best it has ever been my good fortune to meet with. And such singing as we have, both in Church and Sunday School, under the management of Bro. Aurand, is such as gives here a foretaste of joys to come, when every soul attuned in sympathy with the Father shall unite in the grand chorus: 'Worthy art thou O Lord, for thou hast created all things for thy pleasure.'"

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LXXXIII

WHEN THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHOULD COME.

"The mystery of the Kingdom of God."

SCRIPTURE,— Luke xvii. 20–37.

Question. — What question did the Pharisees ask Jesus?

Answer. — Luke xvii. 20.

Q. — How did Jesus say the kingdom of God was not come?

A. — Luke xvii. 20.

NOTE. The kingdom of God signifies the gospel and its propagation among men. No one word or comparison can express its nature, its workings, its manifestations and its conquests. It is like leaven growing secretly. It is like the mustard, manifesting itself outwardly and growing from the smallest beginning to universal influence.

Q. — Why should it not be said that the kingdom of God is not in this place or that?

A. — Luke xvii. 21.

NOTE. It would be more correct to render the words "within you," among you; for Christ was addressing Pharisees, and while the kingdom of God was not within them, it was among them and they knew it not.

Q. — What did Jesus assure his disciples they would desire to see?

A. — Luke xvii. 22.

NOTE. By the days of the Son of Man is meant the days that Christ was with them in the flesh. The troubles and sufferings would be so great that the days when their Master was with them would seem peaceful and happy.

Q. — When they were told to look here or there for the kingdom, what were they to do?

A. — Luke xvii. 23.

NOTE. The Jews expected the Messiah to be an earthly King of the Jews, who would deliver the nation from its conquerors and make it the foremoet nation of the world. And when there was rebellion or war, or a rash pretender to the Messiahship, they looked for the kingdom of heaven. Jesus warns his disciples not to be deceived by these pretences.

Q. — Christ's influence over a large extent of country should be like what?

A. — Luke xvii. 24.

Q. — But what must first occur to Christ himself?

A. — Luke xvii. 24, 25.

Q. — And when the kingdom should come, in what condition would many people be?

A. — Luke xvii. 26, 30.

Q. — When the old institutions were passing away to give place to Christianity, and passing away amid terrible war, what were people to do?

A. — Luke xvii. 31.

Q. — Who afforded them a warning?

A. — Luke xvii. 32.

NOTE. See Gen. xix. 26.

Q. — If a man before these terrible times should seek to save his life—his social life or his physical life—by disregarding Christianity, what would happen to him?

A. — Luke xvii. 33.

Q. — And if one should be true to Christ, regardless of consequences, what would happen to him i these distressing times?

A. — Luke xvii. 33.

Q. — From how close relations would this separation occur?

A. — Luke xvii. 34–36.

Q. — Where should these events take place?

A. — Luke xvii. 37.

NOTE. Wherever the Jews were, there the invading armies would come. And these events were to take place in Judea when Jewish institutions should pass away and give place to the institutions of Christ—when that which was partial should give place to that which was universal, and when men should suffer terrible consequences for opposing the love of God to all men and attempting to confine it to a few.

Answers.

APRIL 13. No. 1, Nebuchadnezzar. No. 2, Thou shalt not steal. No. 3, God.

THE MYRTLE

IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE,

37 Cornhill, Boston.

BENTON SMITH, Agent.

TERMS—PAYMENT TO BE MADE IN ADVANCE.

Single copy, or less than ten, **75** cents per year.

Ten or more copies sent in one package, ***without names***, to one address, **50** cents each per year.

PARTICULAR NOTICE.

The printed date upon each wrapper will show each subscriber how the account stands, and none need expect it continued beyond the term paid for.

In any case where money has been sent, and the date has not been changed to correspond, we will be glad to be notified, and the mistake will be corrected.

Address "Universalist Publishing House,"
37 Cornhill, Boston, Mass.